

cut by the corners 55 and 65 of the walls 51 and 61 respectively if the walls 51 and 61 were not so relieved or shorter than the walls 53 and 63. To further insure against cutting the web 24 of the strip 20, the corners 55 and 65 are rounded as shown in FIG. 11. For clarity and ease of drafting, the rounded corners 55 and 65 are not shown rounded in the other figures.

In FIGS. 7 and 8 the manner in which the ends of the frame members 32, 34, 36, and 38 are joined to each other is shown. In FIGS. 7 and 8 only one corner joint between a top frame member 32 and a vertical frame member 38 is shown. The other corners are of identical construction. Again, each of the frame members 32, 34, 36, and 38 is identical in cross section and each provides a channel 70 running throughout its length and opening outwardly at its ends. The coupling and locking key 30 has two right-angularly disposed legs 72 and 74 for reception into the channels 70 of the frame members, 32, 34, 36, and 38. As shown in FIGS. 7 and 8 the legs 72 and 74 are received into the channels 70 of the frame members 32 and 38 respectively. Each of the legs 72 and 74 of the key 30 is identical in shape and dimension having a generally flat rectangular portion 76 having at its distal end a projection 78. At the other end of each of the legs 72 and 74 is a second projection 82 projecting in the same direction from the plane of the rectangular portion 76. Intermediate the projections 78 and 82 is a third projection 80 which projects from the rectangular portion 76 in the opposite direction from the projections 78 and 82. The dimension in thickness of the legs 72 and 74 is such that there is tight frictional engagement of the legs 72 and 74 in their respective channels 70. The distance a between the plane drawn at the top of the projections 78 and 82 and a parallel plane drawn at the top of the projection 80 is dimensioned to be slightly larger than the dimension b which is the transverse dimension of the channel 70 that receives the legs 72 and 74. In this way, the legs 72 and 74 are caused to flex slightly in a direction perpendicular to the plane of the legs 72 and 74. A difference in thickness of 0.010 between the dimensions a and b has been found satisfactory.

The ends of each of the frame members 32, 34, 36, and 38 are suitably mitered as indicated, for example, at 84 in FIG. 7 thus to permit a mitered and fitted corner. It will be seen that it is only necessary to drive one of the legs 72 or 74 of the key 30 into a channel 70 of one of the frame members 32, 34, 36 or 38 and the other of such legs 72 or 74 into a channel 70 of an adjacent frame member 32, 34, 36, or 38 with a hammer. In this way a tight and neat corner joint will be formed. Of course, the frame members 32, 34, 36, and 38 are first placed about the corresponding edges at the periphery of a panel 12 with their embracing arms 26 and 28 embracing the thickness of the panel 12. When then the coupling and locking keys 30 are driven into place the section 10 is completed except for any accessories such as legs or pliable coupling members 20 that may be required for the particular installation.

FIG. 9 shows the upper portion 90 of one of the legs 16 shown in FIG. 2. In FIG. 9 the upper portion 90 of the leg 16 is shown as having two substantially parallel forwardly extending flanges 96 and 98. At the upper portion of the flanges 96 and 98 they are turned inwardly to provide flanges 92 and 94 projecting toward each other. The flanges 92 and 94 are received in the grooves 52 and 54 respectively of one of the frame members 32, 34, 36, and 38 such as the frame member 38 shown in FIG. 9. The frame member 38 is merely slid downwardly into the top of the leg member 90 with the flanges 92 and 94 in engagement with the grooves 52 and 54 respectively. At the point where the flanges 92 and 94 are formed from the flanges 96 and 98 a shoulder 100 is provided which supports the frame by engagement with the end 102 of the frame member 38. The key 30, shown in dotted lines in FIG. 9, is narrower than the distance between the inner edges of the flanges 96 and 98 thus permitting it to pass freely therebetween.

Another form of leg is shown in FIG. 10 in which the leg 14 is shown as comprising a bottom foot portion 104 threaded into a nut 106 fixed in any known manner in the bottom of a

substantially square casing 108. A metal clip 110 is dimensioned with its lower end 112 smaller than the internal dimension of the casing 108. The springlike clip 110 has two upwardly extending legs 114 and 116 which extend upwardly and outwardly with respect to the bottom portion 112. The legs 114 and 116 have inwardly turned flanges 118 and 120 respectively. These confronting flanges 118 and 120 engage in the grooves 52 and 54 respectively of the lower frame member 56. When assembling the leg 14 to the frame, the confronting flanges 118 and 120 may either be slid into their respective grooves 52 and 54 from the end of the frame member 36 or, the legs 114 and 116 may be sprung apart sufficiently to permit the flanges 118 and 120 to engage the grooves 52 and 54 respectively. The metal clip 110 is then forced into the casing 108 which causes the sprung legs 114 and 116 to be forced toward each other by the upward edges 122 and 124 of the casing 108. Thus the flanges 118 and 120 are firmly held in position in their respective grooves 52 and 54. The foot 104 is provided to be threadedly engaged in the nut 106 to provide height adjustment for the leg. An opening 126 is provided in the bottom portion 112 of the metal clip 110 in order to permit free passage of the threaded portion 128 of the foot 104.

It will be seen by reference to FIG. 2 that when a freestanding single section 10 is to be used, legs of the type shown at 16 and in FIG. 9 are utilized in order to provide suitable stability. However, when a series of sections 10 are to be used in angular relationship to each other, legs such as the leg 14 shown in FIG. 10 may be provided for the sections 10, either alone or in combination with the legs 16. Additionally, if a plurality of sections 10 are to be provided in a rectilinear arrangement, then the legs such as leg 16 shown in FIG. 9 may be used either alone or in combination with the leg 14 shown in FIG. 10.

It will be obvious that the grooves 52 and 54 and the frame members 32, 34, 36, and 38 may be used for other accessories in addition to the legs 14 and 16 and the flexible plastic coupling strip 20. For example, as shown in FIG. 1, magazine racks 140, lamps 142, or coat hangers 144 may be provided with a suitable flanges with enlargements such as enlargements 22 or other means for engagement in either one or both of the grooves 52 and 54. As shown, the rack 140 engages a groove on the opposite side of a section 10, the coat hanger 144 engages a groove on the near side of a section 10, and the lamp 142 engages both grooves.

In the sections 10 any one of a number of constructions for the panel 12 may be used. One preferred form of construction for the panel 12 comprises a lamination of three layers as shown in FIG. 6. The layers 130, 132, and 134 are preferably wood fiber insulation board material of the type commonly used for acoustical ceiling tile. The outer surfaces 42 and 44 of the panel 12 are then punched in known manner to provide openings such as openings 136 in the fibrous board layers 130 and 132 thus to provide acoustical openings similar to those commonly provided in ceiling tile. The layers 130, 132, and 134 are laminated together to provide the basic full thickness of the panel 12. For appearance, the outer surfaces 42 and 44 may be covered with any number of materials including paint, fabric, plastic films, or other like materials. In one preferred embodiment a layer of burlap is provided on each of the surfaces 42 and 44. If the surfaces 42 and 44 are covered with materials that are impervious to sound such as layers of paper, plastic film or the like, then, in that event, the punching of the layers 130 and 132 should be performed after the lamination of such materials to the surfaces 42 and 44 in order to provide openings into the layers 130 and 132 from the outside. As shown in FIG. 6 the surfaces 42 and 44 are covered with a fabric such as linen 42' and 44' which is air permeable and as such does not require punching after application to the surfaces 42 and 44 respectively.

In assembling the panel and the frame to form a divider section, each of the frame members 32, 34, 36, and 38 is applied to an edge of the panel 12 with its arms 26 and 28 embracing the opposite surfaces of the panel 12. A cornerlocking key 30 is then applied at each corner. The projections 46 and 48 on